



**WHANGANUI**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

## **Statement of Proposal**

**Proposed Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy**  
**2017**

## **1. SUMMARY OF INFORMATION**

Whanganui District Council (“the Council”) is seeking feedback on the Proposed Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy 2017 (proposed policy) for the purpose of improving the health of residents by reducing the prevalence of smoking,

This is a district-wide policy and is applicable to all residents and visitors of the Whanganui District.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

Whanganui District Council is proposing to adopt Proposed Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy 2017.

The purpose of this policy is to give effect to Whanganui District Council’s (Council) leading role in ensuring we have healthy communities by reducing the prevalence of smoking.

This policy aims to work towards achieving the following three objectives:

- Contribute to improving the health of residents by reducing the prevalence of smoking and the impacts of second-hand smoke.
- Reduce the visibility of smoking in public places and denormalise smoking for children and young persons.
- Deliver Council leadership and advocate for a smokefree district.

The policy is applicable to the Whanganui District.

This Statement of Proposal has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in section 86 of the LGA 2002 for the adoption of the Special Consultative Procedure. It includes:

- a) a proposed Proposed Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy 2017;
- b) the reasons for the proposal;

## **3. REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL**

In 2013, Whanganui’s population was over-represented in the amount of the people that identify as regular smokers (17.3%) compared to National trends (13.7%). More recent figures provided by Whanganui Regional Health Network showed that in 2016, 19.3% of the Whanganui population identified themselves as regular smokers.

Council considers a policy is necessary to contribute to achieving the Government’s Smokefree 2025 vision where less than 5% of New Zealanders will identify as smokers. Having a policy delivers Council’s commitment is to taking a leading role in ensuring we have healthy communities by reducing the prevalence of smoking.

The perceived problem the policy aims to address is the high prevalence of smoking and health effects of passive smoking within the District.

The current setting for this policy is as follows:

- Around 5000 people die each year in New Zealand because of smoking or second-hand smoke exposure<sup>1</sup>.
- Smoking was one of the two leading modifiable risks to health in 2013 accounting for about 9% of all illness, disability and premature mortality<sup>2</sup>.
- In 2013, 17.3% of Whanganui residents identified themselves as regular smokers (Census 2013); in 2016, 19.3%<sup>3</sup>
- Second-hand smoke fine particulates were found to reach in one instance 49mcg/m<sup>3</sup> (PM2.5) within the Town Centre; this is nearly two times above the average 24 hour limits recognised by the World Health Organisation<sup>4</sup>
- 9.3% of the Whanganui's population are diagnosed with asthma; 19.5% of 10-14 year olds are asthmatic<sup>5</sup>.
- In 2015/17, 462 avoidable hospitalisations occurred due to asthma and viral wheeze; 58% of overall asthma admissions are 0-14 age<sup>6</sup>.
- Key results taken from *Whanganui residents' perceptions of smoking survey*<sup>7</sup>
  - 23% of residents always see someone smoking in the town centre
  - 16% of residents always see someone smoking in a district park, reserve, sportsground, or playground
  - 84% and 79% of residents agree or strongly agree for the town centre and parks, reserves, sportsgrounds, and playgrounds to remain smokefree respectively.
  - 85% of residents agree or strongly agree for all public building entrances and exits to be smokefree.

The proposed policy is within the scope of the powers granted to local authorities under the Act.

#### **4. OPTIONS**

The Council has identified two options for addressing the perceived problems.

##### **Option 1: Do nothing**

This option means Council does nothing does not adopt the proposed policy. This would mean the current Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy 2014 would continue to operate, though ineffectively given its narrow scope, lack of implementation, and diluted Council leadership and advocacy.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid,

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health 2016

<sup>3</sup> Provided by Whanganui Regional Health Network, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs313/en/>

<sup>5</sup> Provided by Whanganui Regional Health Network, 2017

<sup>6</sup> Provided by Whanganui Regional Health Network & Whanganui District Health Board, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> *Whanganui residents' perceptions of smoking*, Whanganui District Council 2017

This option is determined to be unsupported by the public as there is generally strong support for the retention and expansion of existing smokefree areas. Taking this option can be interpreted as a backward step for Council from its long withstanding position of improving the District's health and goes against improving national health targets as stated in the Leading Edge Strategy.

### **Option 2: Adopt the Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy 2017 (Preferred option)**

This option would mean the policy is adopted.

This option supports public opinion to retain and expand current smokefree areas and gives effect to an educational and supportive approach, in sync with restorative practices.

This option provides Council the opportunity to retain its current strong position of improving the District's public health, helping to reduce the uptake of smoking amongst teenagers, and make smoking less normal in the eyes of children and young people.

## **5. PROPOSED SMOKEFREE OUTDOOR AREAS POLICY 2017 AT A GLANCE**

A summary of the key aspects of the proposed draft Smokefree Outdoor Areas Policy are:

### **Smokefree District**

The Council will collaborate with partner organisations and agencies to promote Whanganui as a Smokefree District – focusing on the benefits of discouraging smoking in public places and the corresponding benefits to residents of breathing clean air.

The Council will partner with health, local businesses, organisations, and agencies to encourage and support any business or organisation that wishes to designate its premises as a smokefree area, where staff and visitors are encouraged to refrain from smoking.

### **Smokefree outdoor areas**

This policy sets the following areas as 'smokefree' locations where people are encouraged to refrain from smoking:

- All parks, reserves, sportsgrounds, and playgrounds within the district.
- The Town Centre– including Majestic Square.
- The riverfront zone – including the River Traders and Whanganui Farmers Market.
- The Arts and Commerce Zone.
- Beaches
- Public toilets
- Bus shelters
- Footpaths and public carpark spaces adjacent and within proximity to entrances of education facilities and early childhood centres.
- Any outdoor public point of sale

All Council owned and operated facilities are smokefree including:

- Council's Municipal and Infrastructure buildings
- Memorial Hall
- Davis, Alexander, and Gonville libraries
- Royal Wanganui Opera House
- Sarjeant on the Quay
- Whanganui Airport
- Splash Centre
- Council owned Community Halls
- Whanganui Resource Recovery Centre
- I-Site

Additional outdoor areas determined to have sufficient population density, where persons usually congregate and/or public accessibility will be, following public consultation, designated smokefree and publicly promoted.

Approved designated smoking areas for Council employees and visitors are permitted.

#### **Entrances and exits to all public buildings**

The public are encouraged to refrain from smoking within four metres of an entrance or exit of any public building accessible to the public such as:

- Shopping amenities such as Trafalgar Square;
- Places of worship;
- Places of accommodation such as hotels and motels;
- Commercial, trade, and other business premises;
- Recreational and sporting facilities;
- All facilities administered by Council on behalf of communities;

This policy statement reflects our local communities' values and preferences, aiming to stop smokers from congregating outside entrances to or exits from public buildings.

Buildings used for residential purposes are not covered by this policy statement.

#### **Council hire and lease agreements**

All contractual agreements to hire Council owned facilities or equipment use are now smokefree. Council will support persons or organisations intending to hire Council owned facilities or equipment use by providing Smokefree toolkits to assist hirers in providing smokefree outdoor spaces.

Approved designated smoking areas will be allowed only on the grounds the designated area is not situated where persons would normally frequent, or within four metres to a public building entrance or exit.

#### **Events**

The Council will extend the Smokefree District concept to ensure all events funded and supported by the Council will be smokefree.

#### **Education and communication**

In collaboration with health partners, Council will publicise and promote the smokefree areas. This will be achieved by incorporating the existing national Smokefree/ Auahi Kore brand into appropriate signs, posters, and other communication media.

The Council will work with partner organisations and agencies to provide information for smokers who wish to quit smoking and to raise awareness about this policy.

### **6. FORM OF POLICY**

The proposed policy is considered the most appropriate form of policy to address the issues and for the purpose of public consultation.

### **7. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSION**

A copy of the Statement of Proposal, including the proposed policy and information about making a submission can be obtained from the Council website [www.whanganui.govt.nz](http://www.whanganui.govt.nz)

You can make a submission online at [www.whanganui.govt.nz/haveyoursay](http://www.whanganui.govt.nz/haveyoursay) or alternatively submission forms are available from the Whanganui District Council Customer Service counter at the main municipal building located at 101 Guyton Street, the Davis Central City Library and Gonville Library. Please indicate whether you would like to speak to your submission and include contact details. People who wish to be heard by Council will be given the opportunity to do so. The time and venue for the hearing of submissions is yet to be confirmed.

For any queries please contact Alex Staric, Policy Advisor on (06) 349 0001.

The period for making submissions is from **9am Monday 29 May 2017 and 5pm Monday 26 June 2017**

### **8. STATEMENT PROPOSING THE PROPOSED SMOKEFREE OUTDOOR AREAS POLICY 2017**

Council proposes to consider submissions on the consulted Proposed Smokefree Outdoor Areas policy 2017.

### **9. REASONS**

Council considers a policy is necessary to reduce smoking prevalence, reduce public nuisance and health risks associated with passive smoking, and reduce prevalence of smoking in public places.

## 10. PROPOSED CONSULTATION PLAN

| <b>TASK</b>   | <b>DATE</b>               |
|---|---------------------------|
| Council approval of the Statement of Proposal for public consultation | Thursday 25 February 2017 |
| Submissions open  | 9am Monday 29 May 2017    |
| Submissions close   | 5pm Monday 26 June 2017   |
| Hearing of submissions  | 11 July 2017 TBC          |
| Deliberations   | Tuesday 11 July 2017 TBC  |
| Final adoption by Council   | Tuesday 8 August 2017     |